

# Content Standards Informer

Curriculum and Instruction Unit

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## Communication Arts

### Contacts:

Terri Barclay  
[tbarclay2@mt.gov](mailto:tbarclay2@mt.gov)  
Early Childhood  
Curriculum Specialist

Colet Bartow  
[cbartow@mt.gov](mailto:cbartow@mt.gov)  
Library Media Specialist

Kris Goyins  
[kgoyins@mt.gov](mailto:kgoyins@mt.gov)  
Communication Arts  
Curriculum Specialist

Michael Hall  
[mhall@mt.gov](mailto:mhall@mt.gov)  
Unit Manager for  
Curriculum and  
Instruction

Jean Howard  
[jhoward@mt.gov](mailto:jhoward@mt.gov)  
Mathematics  
Curriculum Specialist

Deb Poole  
[dpooles@mt.gov](mailto:dpooles@mt.gov)  
Gifted and Talented  
Specialist



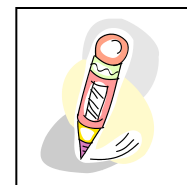
## Opportunity to participate in a no-cost-to-schools pilot of an online formative assessment writing program

The Office of Public Instruction has conducted an extensive search for online writing assessment products and services for formative assessment. During the 2009-2010 school year, OPI contracted with four online writing program developers to provide services to a group of Montana schools as Phase 1 of a pilot test.

- The Phase 1 educators assembled a list of positive attributes and recommended that one of the products be continued in the second phase of the research. Phase 2 of the pilot will be conducted during the 2010-2011 school year.
- The purpose of Phase 2 of this pilot is to gain further experience with the recommended product to inform future decisions on what functions and features of online writing assessment products and services are most beneficial to Montana students and educators.
- Online programs provide immediate feedback to both students and teachers, offer professional development in formative assessment for writing, and record and report student and group data for use by students and teachers. The programs are meant to enhance the writing process and serve as a collaborative tool for students and teachers.
- Teacher and student participants in phase 1 were enthusiastic about online writing programs for formative assessment. See more information about their comments along with the application and guidance at the *MontCAS Presents* link:  
[http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/#p7GPc1\\_3](http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/#p7GPc1_3).

We look forward to your participation.

**OPI Contact:** Kris Goyins, (406) 444-0729 [kgoyins@mt.gov](mailto:kgoyins@mt.gov)



## Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Update

Will Montana adopt the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)? Montana will follow the established policy set forth by the Montana Board of Public Education (BPE). Mathematics and English/Language Arts teachers representing K-12, postsecondary, and administrators from across the state have reviewed the drafts, drafted responses to the drafts, and presented information to the BPE.

Various methods will be used to collect information prior to the recommendation. One is the feedback from the survey which is on the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Web site <http://keysurvey.mt.gov/survey/107148/1910/>. Another is an alignment study. This includes an alignment completed by out-of-state experts; comparison of Montana Content Standards and the CCSS using the Achieve Gap Analysis Tool. Several teachers from across the state began the Achieve Gap Analysis Tool matching CCSS with Montana Content Essential Learning Expectations, August 11-13, 2010, at the Montana Learning Center at Canyon Ferry Lake.

More details about the Common Core Standards can be found on the OPI Web

*The Montana Office of Public Instruction provides vision, advocacy, support, and leadership for schools and communities to ensure that all students meet today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities.*

## Mathematics

site [http://www.opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/Index.html#gpm1\\_7](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/Index.html#gpm1_7) and the Core Standards Web site. <http://www.corestandards.org/>

Should Montana adopt the CCSS? Let us know what you think.

### Tips for Starting the Year!

I hope your year is off to a smooth start. A great resource is the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics website. Here is just one of the helpful pieces of information you can find at [www.nctm.org](http://www.nctm.org).

### Before Your Students Arrive—Be Prepared!

Prepare for the new school year—as much as you can—before the first day of class. Getting the classroom organized and ready for your students before they arrive will give you more time during the year to do what you do best—teach math!

Tips include—<http://www.nctm.org/resources/content.aspx?id=23463>

- creating a mathematics environment;
- managing homework assignments;
- connecting with parents; plus
- setting a goal for your own professional development.



Does your classroom have a Word Wall? When used as a resource it is an effective technique to promote student engagement and understanding. Student generated display of words with visual representation also supports connections between concepts. The Word Wall can be used as a tool for

formative assessment too. Let me know how you use your Word Wall and/or send me pictures as the year progresses.

**OPI Contact:** Jean Howard, (406) 444-0706 or [jhoward@mt.gov](mailto:jhoward@mt.gov)

## Science

Katie Burke, who has just started a new adventure teaching sixth grade science, invites you to visit her classroom at Helena Middle School.

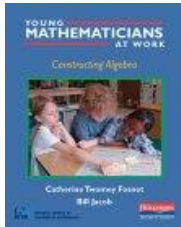
Best of luck to Katie as she helps sixth graders become scientists! The search is underway and we hope to announce a new science curriculum specialist in the October CSI.

## Early Childhood

### Professional Development in Early Childhood Education

The Montana Association for the Education of Young Children (MtAEYC) is having an Early Childhood Conference, October 21-23, 2010 in Missoula, MT.

- Interested in learning more about the *Model Full-Time Kindergarten Curriculum Guide*? Terri Barclay will be presenting on the use of the curriculum guide and the Early Childhood Conference
- To learn more about registration and conference highlights, please follow <http://www.mtaeyc.org/>

<p><b>Early Childhood</b></p>	<p><b>Bringing Out the Mathematician in Every Young Learner</b></p>  <p><u><a href="#">Young Mathematicians at Work: Constructing Algebra</a></u>, by Catherine Twomey Fosnot and Bill Jacob, provides insightful and practical methods for preparing young students for success in algebra, beginning in kindergarten and continuing through grade 8. This book, copublished with Heinemann, is a useful resource for classroom teachers, math supervisors, and curriculum coordinators. <b>OPI Contact:</b> Terri Barclay, (406)444-0753 <a href="mailto:tbarclay2@mt.gov">tbarclay2@mt.gov</a></p>
<p><b>School Libraries</b></p> <p><b>Professional Development</b></p>	<p><b>Welcome Back to School!</b> As we begin the 2010-2011 school year, please don't hesitate to contact your curriculum specialists for information about professional development and resources.</p> <p><b>Professional Development:</b>          MEA-MFT Conference: School Library Institute, Friday, October 22 9:00-4:00, Helena College of Technology. Please register for the MEA-MFT Conference and join colleagues for a day of sharing and planning library information and technology programs for 21<sup>st</sup> century schools. <a href="http://www.mea-mft.org">www.mea-mft.org</a>          Big6 by the Month Webinars: free kick-off webinar on September 15, 3:30 p.m. Visit <a href="http://www.big6.com">www.big6.com</a> for link to this online presentation.</p>
<p><b>Teacher Librarian Wiki</b></p>	<p><b>Resources/Sharing:</b>          Montana Teacher Librarian Wiki: <a href="http://www.opi.mt.gov/groups/mtl">www.opi.mt.gov/groups/mtl</a>          SLMD Listserv: please contact Colet if you would like to be added to this informative list.</p>
<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment:</b>          T.R.A.I.L.S. New tests available for grades 3,6,9,12. <a href="http://www.trails-9.org">http://www.trails-9.org</a></p>
<p><b>Gifted and Talented</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman, leading national expert in Gifted and Talented Education and Response to Intervention, visits Montana</b></p>	<p><b>OPI Contact:</b> Colet Bartow, (406) 444-3583, <a href="mailto:cbartow@mt.gov">cbartow@mt.gov</a></p> <p>This year the MEA-MFT conference at Helena High School, on Friday Oct.22, offers a remarkable opportunity to learn from one of the leading researchers and scholars in the field of exceptional children. Mary Ruth Coleman, Ph.D., is a senior scientist at the FPG Child Development Institute at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research focuses on students with exceptional learning needs, in particular students with learning disabilities and students with gifts.</p> <p>Dr. Coleman will present two three hour sessions. The morning session will focus on meeting the needs of twice-exceptional children--students who are gifted with disabilities, such as autism, learning disabilities, ADHD, etc. In the afternoon her focus will be using the Response to Intervention (RtI) model to meet the needs of high-ability/high-potential students. Her presentations will be instructive for educators who work in special education and/or gifted education. Her presentations are made possible through the cooperation of Montana AGATE and the Office of Public Instruction. A \$10 fee, collected at the door provides lunch and materials.</p> <p><b>OPI Contact:</b> Deb Poole (406) 444-4317, <a href="mailto:dpoole@mt.gov">dpoole@mt.gov</a></p>

<p><b>Technology Literacy</b></p>	<p><b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Technology Literacy Assessment</b></p> <p>Elementary districts that participate in the ESEA Title II, Part D –Enhancing Education Through Technology program (receive funding and have not redirected/transferred the funds to other ESEA Title programs) and have 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must assesses the technology literacy of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The OPI collects and manages the data and then reports the data to the U.S. Department of Education. All participating schools receive a data report listing their students and their score on the assessment and proficiency on the individual standards assessed.</p> <p>To ease the implementation of this requirement and to provide data to districts participating in the assessment, the OPI has adopted the SimpleAssessment as the assessment tool. This tool from the Info Source Learning Company asks students questions about their skills and knowledge and is aligned to the International Society for Technology Education –National Education Technology Standards (ISTE NETS) for students. The ISTE NETS were used as a source document when the Montana Technology Content and Performance Standards for students were developed and thus the assessment is in alignment with the Montana standards.</p> <p>Further information on administering the assessment will be sent to district Test Coordinators and Technology Specialists in the December. The assessment window will be during the month of January 2011.</p> <p><b>OPI Contact:</b> Michael Hall (406)-444-4422 <a href="mailto:mhall@mt.gov">mhall@mt.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Call for nominations</b></p>	<p>The Content Standards Informer would like to feature a school in our monthly online newsletter. If you know of a school that should appear in our column because of the great work they are doing for Montana students, contact us and let us know. We are excited to share the wonderful things that are happening in our schools!</p> <p>The Content Standards Informer (CSI) will be distributed the first Friday of each month through the Content Standards Informer Listserv. If you would like to receive the CSI each month please sign up for the listserv at:  <a href="http://lists.opi.mt.gov/mailman/listinfo/contentstandardsinformer">http://lists.opi.mt.gov/mailman/listinfo/contentstandardsinformer</a>.</p>